

**Legislative Testimony**  
**Appropriations Committee**

**Governor's Bill 7027 – An Act Concerning the State Budget for the Biennium Ending 30 June 2019, and making the appropriations therefore**

**23 February 2017**

**Good Evening Senator Formica, Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee:**

**I am Dr. Stephanie Urillo, a member of the Connecticut State Dental Association, and currently am on the Board of Governors. I have been practicing dentistry in Connecticut for thirty-four years, twenty-nine as a solo practitioner. I am a past Town Council member from Southington, and currently am a member of the Board of the Plainville-Southington Regional Health District. I am writing today to oppose the Governor's proposal to repeal mandated reporting, eliminate the professional assistance account and move the funds to the general fund.**

**Since 2015, the license fee we as dentists, in addition to the physicians, registered dental hygienists, nurses of all types and other health care professionals who purchase a license each year to practice their profession have been assessed \$5.00 to assist HAVEN in their funding. This important entity in turn assists health care professionals who may have substance abuse issues and problems. To date, NONE of these funds have been turned over to HAVEN. This is another instance where monies appropriated for a certain cause have been misused. I ask, would you want an impaired individual working with you to ostensibly keep you healthy? We, collectively are the people in our state who keep people healthy. With all the press regarding substance and opioid abuse in our schools, how about the health care professionals? Simply put, HAVEN needs this funding.**

**In my estimation, this is another slippery slope that the legislators in our state are entering. This is not a beginner run, as they say in skiing, but a double diamond run that only experts must ski. Keep this account sacrosanct and fund HAVEN! Historically, our legislature has misappropriated funds. This is the primary reason our state is in the financial mess where it sits. This initiative is only two years old, and was begun for the primary and sole purpose to fund this entity that helps impaired health care professionals. Do your job and keep these funds allocated for their purpose, aiding those impaired. Again, I ask, would you want an impaired individual working with you? I recently had an emergency appendectomy. I appreciated the care I received from the various practitioners. I certainly hope none were impaired.**

**I find it ironic that in last year's legislative session, a law was passed that held prescribers to prescribe only three days' worth of narcotic/opioid medications. Now, the Governor and all his budget makers, in all their infinite wisdom, have appropriated the funding that was not only mandated when each year health care professionals renew their licenses but was mandated specifically for the purpose of funding HAVEN, to go to the GENERAL FUND!!!! The amount thus far collected is approximately \$800,000.00. HAVEN would greatly benefit from these monies. The health care professionals seen and treated by HAVEN would greatly benefit from the additional aid they would receive on a very timely basis. It would keep the impaired off the street and out of the proximity of those they treat.**

**It is very interesting to me that heroin and opioid abuse for school children has made headlines, but it is swept under the rug that health care professionals may also abuse these drugs, and work, for the most part, in settings where obtaining these drugs may readily occur. As I stated earlier, we are the people that keep people healthy. We MUST be in the right state of mind to do so, and cannot be impaired in any way. DO YOUR JOB! Reinstate the money allocated to HAVEN just for this purpose. And, going forward, assure the contributors that this money will be used ONLY for HAVEN!**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Stephanie A. Urillo, DDS**

**360-15 North Main Street**

**Southington, CT 06489**

**860.276.0027**